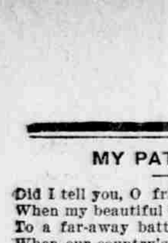
MY PATRIOT BOY.

Did I tell you, O friend, of a proud, sad day
When my beautiful boy went marching away
To a far-away battle-field?
When our country's call was heard by me
And all mothers whose sons were needed to fight
For God and our country and the cause of right.
But my heart stood still and it seemed that a pall
Wrapped me as the world is wrapped by the night.
And I thought as I wrought while the days went by—
And I prayed to my God, whose throne is on high,
And who careth for me to care for my boy,
To bless our land and give us joy
In the light of liberty's sun.
Then victory came, but 'twas purchased dear,
The bells pealed out from far and near,
And I heard loud shouts ring in the air,
And the feet of men rush here and there.
I called aloud: "Is there news for me? What news for me?"
My tear-dimmed eyes can scarcely see—
And I heard for answer, so like a knell:
"It is well with your boy. It is well."
And then I knew my child no more
Would come to me as in days of yore,
And thus the Father had answered my prayer
By taking from earth to the home over there
My darling child, so brave, so dear,
His sweet "My mother" I'll never more hear.
And yet 'twas a glorious death, and he
Died for the life of our dear country,
And your children's children will peace enjoy,
Bought with the life of my precious boy.

WHERE THE BATTLE WAS FOUGHT.



OLD up your right hand, my man."

The witness held up his left hand, and the judge, believing that he was defiant, said with a show of anger:

"Hold up your right hand and take the oath!"

Again the left nand was raised, and the judge, turning to a deputy, shouted:

"Arrest that man for contempt of court. He refuses to hold up his right hand."

"Judge," said the man, a dilapidated specimen of humanity, "I can't hold up my right hand—I left it at Gettysburg a good many years ago. But I can swear all right with my left hand."

There was a sensation in court. No one had noticed that the artificially stuffed sleeve was tucked into the coat pocket at the wrist, giving the figure that defiant air that had aroused the anger of the presiding officer. Now when they knew that no hand was there, a thrill of sympathy ran through the crowd, and the judge was visibly agitated and even apologized.

"I did not know that you had been a soldier," he said gently, as if that fact were excuse enough for any lapse of duty on the present occasion.

"I am a soldier yet," said the man in the witness box; "once a soldier always a soldier, is my creed. I'm under marching orders and likely to join my regiment any time. It's many years since I first went soldiering. I was a likely chap then, judge."

"Yes, yes," said the judge, who had been staring fixedly at the man while his face, flushed and paled with some secret emotion, "but this is hardly the time or place for reminiscences. Your testimony in the case on hand is all that is required now. Counsel for the defense will examine this witness," and the judge turned to other business as if the subject no longer interested him.

But he had not done with it. When he went out of the court house on his way home, the one-armed soldier was waiting for him, and he stopped with an impatient air to hear what he had to say. It was evident that the man had been drinking, and his general appearance was more down at the heels than before.

"Judge," he asked, with tipsy gravity, "might your name be Shields?"

"Yes, my name is Shields. Have you any further business with me? I am in something of a hurry."

"So'm I, Judge Shields. I've been waiting over thirty years to ask you a question and get an answer. You don't happen to know me, judge?"

"No," came the low answer as the judge looked into the face of the soldier with a shifting earnestness, taking in the whole figure in that uncertain way, "I don't think I ever saw you before."

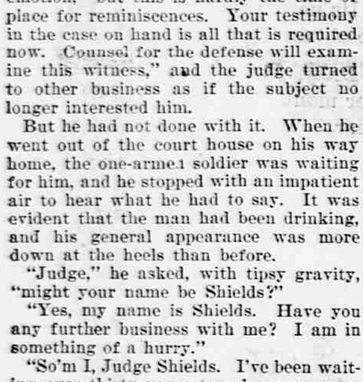
"Think again, my friend—you are my friend, ain't you—did you ever know a young man—a robust, strapping fellow—named Leonard Hurst?"

"My God, man, Leonard Hurst died during the war—he was killed in the battle of Gettysburg, and is buried up in yonder cemetery."

"Is he? That's news to me, Hiram Shields, and it's a lie. He had a friend—a young man like himself—no, not like him, for Leonard Hurst would have given his life for that friend, and thought it no sacrifice—but the friend didn't enlist. He staid at home, and while Hurst was fighting the enemy at the front, Shields, his friend, won his promised wife away from him, married the girl Leonard Hurst had loved all his life."

"I'll hear the story at another time," said Shields, who was in a panic of nervousness over this strange recital.

"You'll hear it now," retorted the other man, swaying back and forth, yet speaking with the utmost distinctness. "Leonard Hurst went away with drums beating, and flags flying, and he was gone three years. One of those years he spent in a Southern prison—the fortune of war. He came home a wreck, to be nursed back to life and strength by those for whose sake he had suffered—he came home to find himself a dead man!"



"CAUGHT HIM BY THE THROAT."

The dry lips of the judge worked convulsively, but he said no word.

"His friend had buried him. A stone at the foot of his grave had his name and number, gathered from the prison hospital. He was dead and buried, and his friend had married his sweetheart."

"You are excited," said Shields, finding his voice; "come home with me and——"

"You haven't heard it all yet. Maybe you think it was hard to stand in front of a fire of shot and shell, and be torn asunder by cannon balls. Why, man, that was nothing, to the soldier, to what he suffered when he came home and found himself shut out of the ranks of living men—read his own name on a gravestone, and heard his friends talk of his death. And that was nothing to the fact that the girl who swore fealty to him had married his false friend. When he knew that, the bitterness of death had passed. It was there his first and last real battle was fought, when he conquered himself, and let the man live who had made earth a hell for him."

"THE SOLDIER LIFTED HIS SHABBY CAP WITH REVERENCE."

"Have you no pension?" asked the judge suddenly.

"Pension? Do they pension dead men?"

The judge was trembling violently. As the effects of the liquor wore off, the soldier became more excitable, and erratic lights flashed from his sunken eyes. His whole expression was a menace to the man who stood trembling before him. But when his strange companion with a sudden swift motion caught him by the throat, Shields made no resistance, and the other holding him thus a moment, threw him off contemptuously.

"Tell me to my face I am dead," sneered the soldier with livid lips, "you who robbed me of the dearest thing I had in life—and of life itself! Assassin! She, too, is dead—perhaps you killed her?"

"Hurst," said Shields, wiping the drops of ghastly fear from his pallid face, "if you are indeed a living man, listen to me. It may be some satisfaction to you to know that Mabel never loved me, although she was my wife. She died with your name on her lips. She believed you dead, and kept your grave green with her tears."

"Say that again!" cried the soldier. "Oh, my God, it pays to have been dead and buried all these years, to know that after all she was true. I had it in my mind to kill you; yes, I meant it when I had my hand at your throat, but those words have saved you! God will settle the account between us!"

"He has settled it," answered Shields solemnly. "He closed the account when he refused me Mabel's love—when He took her from me as the worst punishment He could inflict. But I honestly believed that you were dead—that it was your shattered form I brought from the battlefield and buried up yonder."

"That gave you a right to love Mabel?"

"No"—Shields hung his head in bitter grief and shame—"I—I had tried to win her before that, but she would not listen to me—she never would have listened, but for your death—and, Hurst, that knowledge killed her. She was my wife in name, but her heart was with you."

The soldier lifted his shabby cap with reverence. He raised his eyes to the blue canopy of heaven, and his lips moved in prayer.

"I have fought my last battle," he said, extending his one poor hand to Shields, "we are friends from this hour, comrade."

"You have called me comrade," said Shields, his eyes filling with tears; "I am no soldier, but I know what that word means. We are comrades for the rest of the march—we will part no more. From this hour my home is your home."

Thus it came about that these two became to each other even as David and Jonathan, united by a friendship surpassing the love of woman. Nor is the unknown soldier who sleeps far from home and friends forgotten. On each Memorial day flags wave and flowers bloom over his dust and a white-haired man and a one-armed soldier sit there to talk over the strange enigma of his last resting place.

"Enough if on the page of war and glory,
Some hand has writ his name."

THEY ARE BROTHERS NOW.

The Spirit that Exists Between Veterans of Both Sides.

Although the horrors of war are the more conspicuous where the conflict is between brothers and the struggle is a long and desperate one, the evidences are numerous that, underneath the passion and bitterness of our civil war, there were counter currents of kindly feeling, a spirit of genuine friendliness pervading the opposing camps. This friendliness was something deeper than the expression of mere human instinct; the combatants felt that they were indeed brothers. Acts of kindness to wounded enemies began to be noted at Bull Run, while in every campaign useless picket firing was almost uniformly discountenanced, and the men shook hands at the outposts and talked confidingly of their private affairs and their trials and hardships in the army. This feeling, confined perhaps, to men on the very front line, culminated at Appomattox, where the victors shared rations with their late antagonists and generously offered them help in repairing the wastes of battle.

When the Union veteran returned to the North he did not disguise his faith in the good intentions of the Southern fighting man.

The spirit that moved Lincoln to say in his last inaugural, "With malice toward none," has continued its holy influence. That which must appear to the world at large a startling anomaly, is in truth the simple principle of good-will, unfolding itself under favorable conditions. The war, that is, the actual encounter on the field, taught the participants the dignity of American character.

Their Annual Reunion.

The Man of the Musket.

Soldiers, pass on from this rage of renown,
This ant-hill, commotion and strife,
Pass by where the marbles and bronzes look down
With their fast frozen gestures of life,
Oh, out to the nameless who lie 'neath the gloom
Of the pitying cypress and pine;
Your man is the man of the sword and the plume,
But the man of the musket is mine.

I knew him! By all that is noble, I knew

This commonplace hero I name!
I've camped with him, marched with him, fought with him, too,
In the swirl of the fierce battle-flame!
Laughed with him, cried with him, taken a part
Of his canteen and blanket, and known
That the throb of this chivalrous prairie boy's heart
Was an answering stroke of my own.

I knew him, I tell you! And, also, I knew
When he fell on the battle-swept ridge,
That the poor battered body that lay there in blue
Was only a plank in the bridge
Over which some should pass to a fame
That shall shine while the high stars shall shine!
Your hero is known by an echoing name,
But the man of the musket is mine.

I knew him! All through him the good and the bad
Ran together and equally free;
But I judge as I trust Christ will judge the brave lad,
For death made him noble to me!
In the cyclone of war, in the battle's eclipse,
Life shook out its lingering sands,
And he died with the names that he loved on his lips,
His musket still grasped in his hands!
Up close to the flag my soldier went down,
In the salient front of the line;
You may take for your heroes the men of renown,
But the man of the musket is mine!

The Bourbons in Spain.

In none of their many sovereignties had the incapacity of the Bourbons been more completely demonstrated than in Spain. With intermittent flickerings, the light of that famous land had been steadily growing dimmer ever since Louis XIV. exultingly declared that the Pyrenees had ceased to exist. Stripped of her colonial supremacy, shattered in naval power, reduced to pay tribute to France, she looked silently on while Napoleon trafficked with her lands, mourning that even the memory of her former glories was fading out in foreign countries. The proud people themselves had, however, never forgotten their past; with each successive humiliation their irritation grew more extreme, and soon after Trafalgar they made an effort to organize under the crown prince against the scandalous regime of Godoy. Both parties sought French support, and the quarrel was fomented from Paris until the whole country was torn by the most serious dissensions.—Century.

FOR VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT.

Organizing and Carrying Out a Movement for the Betterment of Towns.

John Gilmer Speed writes upon how to organize and conduct a Village Improvement Society in the Ladies' Home Journal. He prefaces his paper with the assertion that the "future prosperity of the country village depends, in a great measure, upon its suitability for the summer residence of those who prefer, at that season, to leave the hot and crowded cities," and argues further that "a Village Improvement Society should be a pure democracy, and within its membership it should embrace every man and woman of good repute in the neighborhood, and besides this there should be established an auxiliary league of children. This league should be asked, and urged, and instructed to assist the main society. Such societies are usually supported by fees and dues. This is very well in a village where the majority of the people are quite prosperous and usually have a store of ready money at their disposal. But even in such places I prefer the method of supporting the society by purely voluntary subscriptions of money, labor and material. Labor is just as good as money, and is given much more freely by all save those who are rich."

After canvassing the matter Mr. Speed suggests a public meeting, to be addressed by some one familiar with the details of the work, preceding preliminary organization, and the adoption of a constitution. Permanent officers and committees should be named at the first meeting, and preceding the second one the first labor day should be observed. "On that day all the men and teams in the village should congregate to work under the direction of the executive committee, and the ladies of the society should provide a picnic luncheon for the workers that day. In some untidy villages the whole of the first labor day might be given to cleaning up; in others the sidewalks might be put in better order, or pieces of new sidewalk constructed; in nearly every village it would be a good thing to put the grounds and fences of the public schoolhouse in order. But there are always very obvious needs everywhere before the advent of the village improver. But what is done that day should be done with some thoroughness, and the noonday luncheon is apt to invest the day with some of the characteristics of a festival. What is done will be discussed in every house of the village, and the achievements will inspire confidence or provoke criticism."

Of Simple Tastes.

By means of frugality, the Turkish farmer is able to eke out what we should consider a miserable existence. His home is a hovel constructed of sun-dried mud bricks. This one-roomed hovel, without any windows (the only light and air admitted comes down the chimney), serves him and his family as their residence. Adjoining this we find a cellar-like building, which serves to house his live stock. All the surroundings are dirt and untidiness. His food, produced at little cost, consists for the greater part of bread, for which he grows the wheat. This is sometimes varied by a soup made of sour milk and crushed wheat boiled; this is a most nourishing and satisfying dish. He also cooks another dish, equally good, of crushed wheat boiled and flavored with fresh butter. Sometimes he indulges in a dish of fried eggs. Coffee he drinks occasionally. This completes his dietary, and, simple as it is, he is strong and healthy and generally of fine physique. He thinks nothing of a twenty or thirty mile walk, or of doing a day's work of sixteen hours. He would fare badly with the eight-hour system. His clothing costs him even less than his food. He cultivates the cotton from which the women spin the yarn and weave the calico for his clothes. He also allows himself a jacket made of bright colored print. The sheep finds him material for a warmer covering; he knits his own stockings. Boots are unknown to him; he manufactures out of a piece of untanned cowhide a pair of sandals. His cattle find him fuel; he collects all their manure and dries it in the sun. This warms his house, it makes a good bright fire, and also serves to light his room. Lamps and candles are too great a luxury. Tobacco he sometimes indulges in. And yet, in spite of all this frugality, he remains poor.

How the Brain Acts in Insomnia.

Sir James Crichton Browne, the expert on brain diseases, holds that insomnia is not attended with such disastrous consequences as is commonly supposed. It is not as dangerous as the solicitude of the sufferer. He suggests that the brains of literary men, who are the most frequent victims, acquire the trick of the heart, which takes a doze of a fraction of a second after each beat, and so manages to get six hours rest in twenty-four. Some brains, in cases of insomnia, sleep in sections, different brain centers going off duty in turn.

Marine and Land Engines.

It is often a matter of wonder how a marine engine attaining an efficiency greater than those on land can be made in so simple a form and contain only one-half as many pieces. The answer is found mainly in the fact that the resistance to marine engines is constant and uniform, or nearly so, and they can, for this reason, dispense with speed-regulating gearing which causes most of the complications in land engines. The governor, trip-gearing cushioning apparatus and so on is what calls for so many pieces.

Plants for Jail Birds.

Prisoners in the Bangor (Me.) jail are to be supplied with potted plants to care for in their cells. It is believed the care of the plants will have an "elevating and reforming influence."